

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

At the outset it is noted that an Information Disclosure Statement was filed on June 13, 2006. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner acknowledge consideration of the Information Disclosure Statement by returning an initialed and dated copy of the Form PTO/SB/08a that accompanied the same.

Claims 1-47 remain pending. Claims 11, 20-22 and 29-47 are allowed.

Claims 1-5, 13-19 and 23-28 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Boutwell. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Using reference numbers from example embodiments of the invention, claims 1 and 25-27 have been amended above to provide that the pump module includes a suction filter 58 and a fuel filter 60,152,162,182,210,320. The suction filter is disposed on the upstream side of the fuel pump 32,156,170,190,202,302, and the fuel filter 60,152,162,182,210,320 is disposed on the downstream side of the fuel pump 32,156,170,190,202,302. As also recited in amended claims 1 and 25-27, the fuel filter is disposed independently of the suction filter.

In the Official Action, the Examiner argues that the fuel filter 30 in Boutwell can be considered to be disposed on both upstream and downstream sides of the fuel pump 52. In this regard, fuel filter 30 may be alleged to function as both a suction filter and fuel filter. However, as noted above, in accordance with an example embodiment of the invention as defined in amended claims 1 and 25-27, the fuel filter is disposed independently of the suction filter. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the invention defined by claims 1 and 25-27 is not anticipated by Boutwell.

Claims 1 and 25-27 further variously provide that the regulator inlet 82,409 connects to the passage of the fuel filter 60,152,162,182,210,320 from which the fuel filtered by the fuel filter is discharged. This structure is not anticipated by Boutwell either because the inlet of the pressure regulator 104 in Boutwell is not connected to a passage of the fuel filter 32, through which the fuel filtered by the fuel filter 32 is discharged.

Further, according to amended claims 1 and 25-27, pressure regulator 80, 142,340 regulates the pressure of the fuel which is [finally] filtered by the fuel filter 60,152,162,182,210,320. Thus, pressure loss in the pump module is greatly reduced after the fuel is regulated at the pressure regulator 80,142,340. In contrast, in Boutwell, the regulated fuel must be further filtered by a high pressure filter after the fuel is regulated by the regulator 104. Therefore, a pressure loss may be generated at the high pressure filter. Thus, the pump module in Boutwell may not supply fuel having sufficient fuel pressure to an injector. Thus, the invention is not only different from but provides substantial advantages over Boutwell.

For all the reasons advanced above, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection based on Boutwell is solicited.

Claims 6-10 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Izutani in view of Stone. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 6 has been amended above to more specifically characterize the check valve as disposed on an upstream side of the fuel filter and capable of closing from a downstream side to the upstream side so that the check valve stops the flow of fuel from the downstream side to the upstream side. Claim 6 also provides that the fuel inlet of the fuel filter is accommodated within the inner circumference of the discharge portion of the fuel pump. This is understood for example from Figure 1 wherein it can be seen that the check valve 79 is closed from the downstream side to the upstream side, check valve 79 is accommodated in the inner surface of fuel inlet 68 of fuel filter

60, and the fuel inlet 68 is accommodated within the inner circumference of discharge portion 34 of fuel pump 32.

In the Izutani, the check valve (not shown) is accommodated in passage 112, of fuel pump 110 and passage 112 is accommodated in fuel inlet 156 of fuel filter 120. Thus, the relationship among the check valve, fuel pump 110 and fuel filter 120 in Izutani is the reverse of that among the check valve 79, fuel filter 60 and fuel pump 32 defined in amended claim 6 and illustrated for example in Figure 1 of the present application. As noted above, in Izutani, the check valve is accommodated in the outlet passage of the fuel pump and the fuel pump passage is accommodated in the inlet of the fuel filter. In the claimed invention, the check valve is accommodated in the fuel inlet of the fuel filter and the fuel inlet of the fuel filter is accommodated in the outlet passage of the fuel pump.

The secondary reference to Stone does not teach the modification of Izutani so as to produce the invention of claim 6. In fact, Stone teaches away from the claimed invention. In this regard, in Stone, the check valve 200 is closed from the upstream side to the downstream side (see column 7, lines 58-61 and Figure 8); fluid pressure from the upstream side urges the valve closed, and the valve is selectively held open by element 170. Therefore, the closing direction of check valve 200 in Stone is opposite to that defined in amended claim 6. Since the fuel pressure on the downstream side in Stone is applied in an opening direction of check valve 200, that check valve cannot block back flow as does the claimed valve.

The relation of the structural components is also relevant to the claimed disposition of the O-ring. According to the an example embodiment of the invention, the O-ring 38 seals between the discharge portion 34,172,205 of the fuel pump 32, 156,170,190,202,302 and the fuel inlet 68,166,218 of the fuel filter.

In Stone, the O-ring 197 seals between inlet 211 of the fuel filter 150 and outlet 198 of the fuel filter 150. Thus, O-ring 197 in Stone does not seal between the

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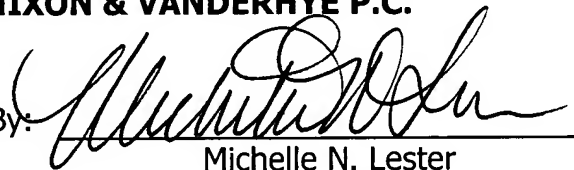
discharge portion of the fuel pump 110 (in Izutani) and the fuel inlet 211 of the fuel filter 150. Thus, the functions and arrangement of the O-ring as defined in amended claim 6 are different from that of Stone, so that the invention claimed would not have been obvious to the skilled artisan from a consideration of Izutani and Stone.

Because of the component part disposition differences and check valve configuration differences noted above, the combination of Izutani and Stone does not anticipate nor render obvious claim 6.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and an early Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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